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## **Environment Department Takes Enforcement Action for Sandia Environmental Violations; Lab Fined \$3.2 Million**

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) today issued three compliance orders to Sandia National Laboratories (SNL) for several violations of state hazardous waste management regulations and Sandia's hazardous waste permit uncovered during a February 2003 inspection. The total civil penalty for these 27 violations is \$3,194,795.

"These enforcement actions again show the new relationship the state is building with the Department of Energy," said NMED Secretary Ron Curry. "As we have done with the Corrective Action Orders, NMED intends to firmly establish regulatory authority over New Mexico's DOE facilities. I hope that DOE continues to work with us on this process and that they respond to these enforcement actions in a positive manner."

According to Claybourne Clarke, NMED Assistant General Council, SNL's 27 violations include failure to segregate incompatible wastes, failure to inspect and maintain emergency decontamination equipment, and failure to properly train personnel on waste characterization, as well as several instances of failing to maintain proper records on waste and inspections. Penalties for individual violations were adjusted upward based on SNL's history of noncompliance. Prior to today's actions, SNL has been issued five compliance orders in the last ten years.

These orders include a schedule of compliance to ensure that SNL adequately addresses the violations and demonstrates compliance with all hazardous waste regulations and its permit. These orders also give Sandia the option of requesting a settlement conference to contest the allegations and/or discuss settlement factors.

All penalties paid will go to the State of New Mexico Hazardous Waste Emergency Fund where they will be available for environmental clean ups.

The orders are between NMED, the United States Department of Energy (DOE) and the Sandia Corporation, who operates the lab under contract with DOE.

For further information contact Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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